VANITY FAIR

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SPECIAL HOLLYWOOD ISSUE

EXCLUSIVE PORTFOLIO OF 150 STARS, STAR-MAKERS AND LEGENDS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ AND HERB RITTS, INCLUDING . . .

The Power and Glamour of the Movies

FILM SPOTLIGHT

HOLY THREEQUEL!!!

Can the new Batman, Val Kilmer, save Gotham from
"Two-Face" Tommy Lee Jones and "Riddler" Jim Carrey?
KEVIN SESSUMS swoops in to catch the action

$64,000,000 QUESTION

Which Mask will hip audiences root for this summer, wild man Jim Carrey as the Riddler or Val Kilmer, *opposite*, as Warner Bros.' gleaming new Batman?

"Absolutely fabulous!" director Joel Schumacher shouts on the set of *Batman Forever*, inadvertently bringing to mind the campy hit British sitcom of that name. Indeed, Patsy and Edina, the dynamic duo of *Ab Fab*, could be the distaff version of Batman and Robin. Each couple is cartoonishly over-the-top. Both sets of buddies are creatures of the night. Neither pair spares an enemy from their hooded tandem gaze. And all four costume themselves in gender-highlighting armor, although Pats and Eddie would surely never be caught in only a body stocking and a cape.

"That's absolutely fabulous!" Schumacher repeats after Olympic gold medalist Mitch Gaylord, serving as Robin's stunt double in this third installment of the *Batman* series, executes an intricate maneuver. Schumacher, who is following producer Tim Burton as the series' director, and the appearance of Robin, portrayed by Chris O'Donnell, are only two of the

Photographs by HERB RITTS • Styled by KATE HARRINGTON

changes that audiences can expect when they line up this summer to buy even more tickets to this mega-successful franchise. (The first two *Batman* adventures have grossed more than $700 million.) "Though we owe all of this to my good friend Tim Burton," says Schumacher, "in this instance imitation is not the highest form of flattery; it's the highest form of insult." With that in mind, the new director has had the Batmobile reconfigured. Gotham has been redesigned. And the crime-fighting outfits that Batman and Robin wear have been sculpted with even more attention to masculine ideals.

Michael Keaton, who twice essayed the Caped Crusader, has been replaced by Val Kilmer. "Val will make the movie fresher and younger," claims Schumacher And much sexier. His chiseled, hard-baked good looks are more heroic to behold, and the ironic distance we lose with Keaton's absence is more than compensated for by Kilmer's charismatic bearing. Executives at Warner Bros. are certainly hoping audiences fall for him with the same force as his new love interest, a criminal psychiatrist played by Nicole Kidman, who performs an alluring kind of alchemy in the role, combining Veronica Lake with Jessica Rabbit. As for the villains, Schumacher and Burton have cast two of Hollywood's hottest actors. Tommy Lee Jones portrays Two-Face–half of his face is acid-stained, half is normal–and that most infamous of Batman's enemies, the Riddler, will be played by none other than Jim Carrey. What Carrey, the zaniest star to zigzag across the Hollywood firmament in decades, will do with the role remains, well, a question mark.

"There are mythic qualities at play here," says Schumacher as he prepares to film the next scene. "Yet we mustn't forget what our source material is. It's a *comic book!*"